

Message Text

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21

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /026 W

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R 170206Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3710

INFO COMUSSAG NKP THAILAND

CINCPAC HONOLULU

COMIPAC HONOLULU

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 2961

EXDIS

MIL ADDRESSEES HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

FOLLOWING TELEGRAM FROM BIEN HOA 166 SENT ACTION AMEMBASSY SAIGON
MARCH 15 BEING REPEATED TO YOU:

C O N F I D E N T I A L BIEN HOA 166

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, VS

SUBJ: MILITARY SITUATION IN MR3

1. THIS MESSAGE IS BASED ON A CONVERSATION WITH THE MR3 CHIEF
OF STAFF AT 1000 HOURS MAR 15. WE WERE JOINED FOR PART OF THE
DISCUSSION BY THE MR3 COMMANDER.

2. THE MOST SIGNIFICANT NEW DEVELOPMENT IN MR-3 SINCE OUR MAR 14
REPORTS WAS THE CAPTURE MAR 14 SOUTH OF CHON THANH IN BINH LONG
PROVINCE OF 6 POW'S WHO IDENTIFIED THEMSELVES AS FROM THE 3RD BN,
273RD REGT, 341ST NVA DIV - ONE OF THE 3 NORTH VIETNAMESE RE-
SERVE DIVISIONS BELIEVED RECENTLY TO HAVE MOVED SOUTH FROM NORTH
VIETNAM. ONE OF THE 6 WAS AN ASPIRANT WHO HAS DECLARED THAT 2
BNS OF THE 273RD WERE SENT TO QUANG DUC AND ON TO BINH LONG. HE
HAS SAID THAT HIS DIVISION HAS NOT OTHERWISE BEEN DEPLOYED IN
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EITHER OF THESE PROVINCES - ONLY THE BATTALIONS AND ONLY TO

REPLACE OTHER UNITS. HIS BN, HE SAID, WAS SENT TO CHON THANH TO
FILL IN BEHIND A UNIT OF THE 9TH NVA DIV DEPLOYED ELSEWHERE. MR3
REGARDS THIS ACCOUNT AS PRELIMINARY AND NOT NECESSAIRLY RELIABLE
AT THIS STAGE. THE 6 POS'S WERE TAKEN IN AN ENGAGEMENT WITH GVN
RANGERS IN WHICH THE NVA ALSO HAD 19 KIA. THE RANGERS DESCRIBED
THESE TROOPS AS YOUNG, GREEN, AND NOT VERY EFFECTIVE.

3. ON OTHER MATTERS, ROUTE 22 IN TAY NINH REMAINED OPEN THE MORNING
OF MAR 15. SUPPLY CONVOYS WERE SENT OVER THE ROAD THROUGHOUT THE
NIGHT MAR 14-15. MR3 HAS INTELLIGENCE INDICATIONS THAT NVA FORCES
ATTACKING IN EASTERN TAY NINH ARE SHORT OF ARTILLERY AMMO AND
THAT PRESSURE IN THAT AREA FOR A DAY OR 2 MAY BE LIGHTER PENDING
NVA RESUPPLY.

4. GO DAU HA, SITE OF THE MR3 ADVANCE CP AND HQ FOR THE 3RD
ARMORED BRIGADE DURING THIS CAMPAIGN, HAS BEEN TAKING INCREASINGLY
HEAVY ABF'S INCLUDING ARTILLERY. HELICOPTERS OF THE DEP MR3 CMDR
AND THE 3RD ARMORED CMDR WERE DAMAGED THERE BY ABF MAR 15
MORNING. WE UNDERSTAND THAT MR3 WILL DOWNGRADE ITS PRESENCE IN GO
DAU HA FROM ADVANCE CP TO A LIAISON UNIT AND WITHDRAW MOST OF
ITS SENIOR STAFF BACK TO BIEN HOA.
PETERS UNQUOTE
LEHMANN

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NNN

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